



## **Taliban perpetuate Muslim world's failed governance paradigm**

*Al-Arab:*

**“The Taliban’s control of Afghanistan spotlights the failed model of government in Muslim states”**

**Nahdlatul Ulama represents a unique exception to the mosque–state alliance perpetuated by Middle East autocrats**

SINGAPORE, September 9, 2021: In a hard-hitting article published on the eve of the 9/11 attacks’ 20th anniversary, veteran foreign correspondent and Senior Fellow at National University of Singapore’s Middle East Institute, Dr. James M. Dorsey, argued that Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama constitutes a unique exception to the cycle of authoritarianism, underdevelopment and violence that afflicts so much of the Muslim world.

Dr. Dorsey wrote:

The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan perpetuates a paradigm of failed governance in the Muslim world based on a centuries-old alliance between Islamic scholars and the state that, according to [scholar Ahmet T Kuru](#), explains underdevelopment in many Muslim-majority states and authoritarianism in most.

The takeover also highlights that, in a twist of irony, a majority of competitors for Muslim religious soft power, leadership of the Muslim world, and the ability to define Islam have as much in common as they have differences.

It further spotlights the Muslim world’s struggles to free itself from the shackles of a paradigm that is at the root of its ills. That struggle has expressed itself in a decade of protest, dissent, defiance, and often brutally suppressed or derailed popular revolts as well as the self-defeating flight into militant and jihadist interpretations of the faith that fail to recognize that their radical view is nothing else but another variant of a failed model.

Neither do the other major religious soft power contenders, with the exception of Nahdlatul Ulama, one of the world’s largest, if not the largest Muslim organization...

Nahdlatul Ulama, a politically influential civil society movement, is the only non-state player in what amounts to a battle for the soul of Islam that will determine the degree to which a moderate Islam incorporates principles of tolerance, pluralism, gender equality, secularism, and human rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

A wide range of international media outlets swiftly translated and/or republished the article, including prominent Arabic-language newspaper *Al-Arab*.

Dr. Dorsey’s analysis reflects a growing awareness among Muslim and non-Muslim thinkers across the world of the need for Middle East states to follow Indonesia’s lead in blocking the

political weaponization of Islam if they are to transition into modern, developed societies fully integrated with the global economy, much less return to the glory the Muslim world enjoyed during its golden age over one thousand years ago, when Islamic societies were characterized by relative openness, intellectual freedom and prosperity.

In contrast to the [heavily politicized legacy](#) of Islam in the Middle East, which continues to inspire many of its government and religious leaders, Indonesia's Nahdlatul Ulama seeks to foster a [Humanitarian Islam](#) that is rooted in the principle of universal love and compassion (*rahmah*).

Read the complete article in [English](#) or [Arabic](#).